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ABSTRACT

A 4-week study at Goshen (Indiana) Middle School examined the internal and external factors affecting Hispanic student achievement. Data were collected through classroom observation, student interviews, and a survey of Latino parents. Although teacher responses to Hispanic student classroom participation were always positive, student responses, from Anglos and Hispanics alike, were less positive. When Hispanic students were given equitable response opportunities, grades improved an average of 10 percent. When the teacher was within an arm's length, Hispanic students stayed on task more, seemed more focused, attempted assignments more readily, completed work more accurately, and submitted more completed assignments. Teacher proximity resulted in grades improving 10 percent for some students, more for others, and not significantly for those already achieving satisfactorily. When Hispanic students sat together, work was turned in 15 percent more often, accuracy improved 10 percent, and grades improved. The rephrasing and reviewing of material in Spanish when Hispanic students sat together led observers to believe that they processed information into long-term memory via Spanish. The study found that it was important to Hispanic students and their families to retain their ability to speak Spanish, and that when teachers spoke Spanish in class, Hispanic students' grades improved. Results of the parent survey indicate that Hispanic parents were very supportive of their children's education but that communication between school and home was poor. Exploration of external factors led to the following recommendations: teachers should learn and use Spanish, occasionally let Hispanic students take assessments in Spanish, and build relationships with Hispanic students and their families. Contains nine figures and the parent questionnaire in English and Spanish. (TD)

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CULTURAL PERSPECTIVES AT GOSHEN MIDDLE SCHOOL

Examination of internal and external factors that affect Hispanic student achievement.

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April 22, 1999

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Introduction:

Goshen Middle School educators continue to teach in classroom environments that are continually changing, encompassing more culturally, intellectually, and economically diverse groups. This fact puts us at risk for biased treatment of students.

The Goshen community continues to have a minority population of nearly twenty per cent and the school system also reflects these numbers. Seventeen per cent of the student body at GMS is of a minority and eighty eight per cent of those students are Hispanic. Goshen Middle School does attempt to address the growing Hispanic cultural with the English As A Second Language Program, (ESL),and offers one certified staff member who is Hispanic.

Our previous research focused on identifying cultural bias at GMS and determining if it impacts student achievement. Three themes emerged that required further investigation. The first theme concerns Hispanic/Latino student attitudes towards academics. Our research showed that as the Hispanic student population progresses through their middle school years they increasingly feel the need to adjust to American culture in order to be successful after high school graduation. Student interest in their studies fell sharply from the 6th to the 8th grade.
(Bartley: et al, 1998)

The second theme to emerge was that of the Hispanic/ Latino attitudes toward the social environment at GMS. Our previous research indicated this population feels comfortable socially in GMS classrooms. Based upon this research, one might tend to conclude that if things are comfortable in the classroom, any lack of Hispanic/Latino student success would be attributed to internal factors, (for example, personally held beliefs and perspectives about the importance of the educational opportunities at GMS), rather than environmental biases impinging on them.

The third theme we felt needed more attention was the low felt need by Anglo students to improve relationships with non-english speaking students.

We chose to examine the first two themes in more depth. Is there current information available that supports our theory that Hispanic/ Latino students lose interest as they progress through the middle school? What are the possible ways to increase involvement and interest in academics, the internal factors? Secondly, what are the external factors that affect student achievement? What are the views and beliefs held by the Hispanic community that could possibly impact student

achievement? Put more simply, our research questions is, what are the internal and external factors that affect Hispanic student achievement?

A significant number of Hispanic/Latino students fall below the minimum standard on the ISTEP State Wide Assessment Program. Many Hispanic/Latino students do not take the ISTEP test. We are unsure of why some Hispanic/Latino students are exempt from taking the test. We speculate it may be the student's lack of English proficiency skills or possibly test bias. This can also be supported by the fall 1998 Level Test administered where the majority of Hispanic/Latino students were average or above in their Math goal achievement but 80% were low in their Reading and Language goal achievement. This is curious since academic statistics point out a stronger performance in comparison to Anglo students in Social Studies than in Math when comparing the GPA between the language based curriculum and the number based subject.

Our PBA plan focuses on improving instruction for all students. We may not have formal assessments for our Hispanic/Latino population that would provide us an awareness of their needs and or deficits. We feel our research will benefit Hispanic/Latino students and their teachers by providing some awareness of the general education classroom environment for Hispanic/Latino students and instructional practices that are beneficial for them. Our interventions attempted this year have proven to be effective, and will meet some of the identified needs of this population. We are hopeful that these interventions can provide more success for our Hispanic/Latino population in the regular education classroom. We are also hopeful our research will inspire other educators to look at their instructional practice and its effectiveness in meeting the needs of all children who are below minimum standards.

We know from last year's research that Hispanic/Latino student's academic performance and general interest in academics drops precipitously through the middle school years. In this paper we will describe the internal and external factors we identified, our research of those factors, our comparisons, and the outcome of the evolved interventions we made. We suggest that cultural bias does exist in part at GMS but strategies can be implemented that can effectively alter those bias'. We chose TESA, (Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement), as a spring board for our observations and interventions.

The theory of Teacher Expectations and Student Achievement

TESA is a research-based program that focuses on expectation theory. Thomas Good defines teacher expectations as, "inferences that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about these students now (Good, 1987, page 32). "

According to Good , teachers quickly form expectations for individual students' learning based primarily on their own perceptions (e.g. race, class, physical appearance, gender, and physical and emotional challenges) (Good, 1987). Teachers also base their expectations on more objective information such as past achievement, diagnostic labeling, test scores, group placement, etc. Teacher intervention with students is influenced by these expectations, particularly how the teacher asks questions, gives feedback, and expresses personal regard. TESA is designed to intervene by heightening teachers' awareness of their perceptions and how these perceptions affect their expectations of students and student achievement.

What other researchers are saying

Research indicates that teachers call on male students more frequently that female students. Males are called on, by name, more frequently than females. Minority students were not as interaction low as female students, but had fewer interactions than majority students. Simply stated, minority students of both sexes receive less attention from the instructor. In approximately half the classes they observed, a few students received more than three times their share of classroom interventions. Approximately twenty five per cent of all students, in all classes, did not participate in any classroom interaction (Sadker and Sadker,1985).

The type of feedback a student receives from his teacher may be related to to their race or ethnicity as well as their achievement. TESA reports studies indicate that higher rates of approval are generally associated with higher pupil achievement. (TESA, 1993) Further, Adams and Bittle, (1970), report that physical placement in the classroom affected the extent of pupil participation. "Pupils up and down the center

line of the classroom are the ones who are most likely to join in the discussion, and the ones the teacher is most likely to talk to. "

Martinez and Dukes, (in Lee,1995), found that Hispanic middle school students tend to have lower levels of self-esteem than Anglos when the domain is school related. They tend to have higher self-concepts when the domain is more personally oriented.

Methods

OUR Procedures

In our study we combined several methods of data collection. We used student observations, student attitude interviews, over all grade point averages, Social Studies grades derived from assignments and tests, and a survey (we wrote and administered) for our Hispanic/Latino parents. We also consulted with the guidance department at GHS, consulted with the ESL department at GMS, wrote a letter to the editor of the Goshen News asking for community input, and scheduled time on the local Hispanic radio talk show.

Procedures for examining the internal factors

Observations. We chose to use a participant-observer method to observe classes where interventions were being tested. Both Mrs. Bartley and Ms. Sutton observed seventh grade Social Studies classes taught by Mr. Swihart. Seating charts, notes, and coding forms were devised to use in the observations. The same third period, 43 minute class was targeted each time since that was where the largest concentration of Hispanic/Latino population was. Mrs. Bartley also observed in another seventh grade, 43 minute, Social Studies class taught by Mrs. Wilson. Due to time restrictions and other factors, more informal, casual, less statistical anecdotal notes were kept from Mrs. Wilson's class and used as affirmation and /or comparison with Mr. Swihart's observations and data collections. We chose to look at 3 strands of teacher instruction: response opportunities, feedback, and proximity as they relate to our Hispanic/ Latino student population. (Figure 1a & b).

We made classroom observations before making interventions and then after making selected interventions. We gathered information on grade point averages

before and after our interventions. The original grade point averages from the beginning of our study was used each time to compare results of each intervention.

Student interviews:

It has been our experience that translating surveys is difficult and content is sometimes lost or misconstrued, therefore, we decided to survey our Hispanic/Latino students ourselves , in English. Hispanic/Latino students in both Social Studies classes were given the student attitude survey orally so that the interviewer was assured the student understood the questions. We felt this type of data gathering provided a much more personal view of the needs of our Hispanic/Latino students. It was perceived that necessary rapport between both parties had been established validating this procedure. The interview provided us with the awareness we needed to begin our research. It also allowed us to later share our awareness of them, our research findings, and enabled them to become more aware of themselves.

Procedures for examining the external factors

One of us was kindly invited to be a guest on a local Spanish radio program, called "Valdados Humana en las Americas" on WGCS, 91.1 FM, by the program host Jimmer Prieto. This program has a very wide listening audience among the Hispanic community in the Goshen area. Our aim was to open some lines of communication between the school and the Hispanic community on some of the key issues that were raised by our research.

Each of the ESL students in the 7th and 8th grade was given one of the Parent Input questionnaires, written in Spanish, and asked to take it home to their parents to have them respond to it. (Figure 2a and b.)

The GHS Guidance Department was consulted for information regarding the Hispanic drop-out rate in the Goshen Community School system. No information was available.

Periodic enlightening discussions and interviews took place between members of our group and the GMS Hispanic Social Worker, ESL teachers, and the director of the Goshen Youth Soccer Organization (GYSO).

A letter was submitted to the editor of The Goshen News asking for input regarding perspectives on the lack of participation by Hispanic families in the GYSO. (Figure 3.)

Our results and discussion:

school survey:

Our student survey, (Figure 5), on school attitude indicated the majority of our Hispanic/Latino students felt they were doing ok and being successful. (Figure 5.) This compared favorably to their GPA's and Social Studies grades. The majority felt they were good readers, better in Spanish, and that they did what they were suppose to do in class. However, eighty per cent of our Hispanic/Latino students stated they did not like to be called on in class. They elaborated on this by stating they felt they did not read well enough in English. Even though teacher response to their classroom participation was always observed as being positive, some student responses to Hispanic/Latino students were less positive. Although it wasn't observed often, the less positive responses came from all, (Anglo and Hispanic), students. The less positive responses were giggles, or raised eye brows when a word was mispronounced. One time a Hispanic student said to another Hispanic student who was reading aloud, "Hey man why are you trying to read?"

Equity in the classroom requires awareness and effort. We found out initially that not all of our Hispanic/Latino population were recipients of equitable distribution in response opportunities, or proximity. However when they did respond they were given positive teacher feedback every time we observed.

Theme 1 response opportunities

Our first intervention was to provide our Hispanic/Latino students with equitable amounts of response opportunities on a regular basis. It needs to be noted however, it is difficult to know what is an equitable amount if not all Anglos are called on equally. In a conscious effort, Mr. Swihart would go down through his grading book or down through the line of seats to ensure all students were given their fair share of response opportunities. This intervention went on for 4 weeks. Over all grades improved an average 10%. (Figure 6).

Our Hispanic/Latino students responded to the interventions reluctantly. In our observations we saw that these students needed the teacher's encouragement and assurance when being called on in class became more frequent and on a more regular basis. For one Hispanic/Latino student a tangible reward, (Mt Dew), was needed to get him to participate. However, after experiencing success, the student began raising his hand and participating on his own without a tangible reward being promised. The teacher's positive feedback was satisfactory. It also is interesting to note that this student was the same one who asked another Hispanic student, "Hey man why are you trying to read?"

Teacher response or feedback was given in a positive way every time in the initial observations and does not appear in our research to be a factor.

Theme 2 Proximity

Proximity appears to be an intervention that is beneficial. Proximity, meaning the teacher was within an arm's length, seemed to keep the students more involved. It was observed that when proximity was implemented Hispanic/Latino students stayed on task more, seemed more focused, attempted assignments more readily, completed work more accurately, and more completed assignments were handed in as a result of this intervention. This intervention went on for 4 weeks. Again this intervention improved grades upwards of 10% for some students, more for others, and for a few students who were already achieving satisfactorily it did not cause a significant change. (Figure 6).

It needs to be noted however, that these students would ask for new seating often. It appeared that they want to be grouped together. This led to another classroom intervention we placed under proximity.

For four weeks Hispanic/Latino students were given the opportunity to choose where and by whom they sat. When allowed to choose, these students chose to sit together. When sitting together, grades improved. Work was turned in 15% more often and accuracy on the work completed improved 10%. (Figure 7). Hispanic/Latino students helped each other more when seated together. We questioned if the reteaching, and at times, interpreting, that was going on was the reason grades improved. It should also be noted that they tended to speak Spanish more and at

times were more off task, needing the teacher to redirect behavior more often. Redirections were done verbally and with the use of proximity. The teacher was closer to the Hispanic group during those times.

Another unexpected awareness surfaced. When Hispanic/Latino students were seated together they frequently would interpret and rephrase the material or assignment among each other. By rephrasing and reviewing the material in Spanish, we wondered if Hispanic/Latino students preferred the "Spanish channel" when processing the information into long term memory. Learning the information in Spanish also appears to provide a base on which to build English skills. Knowing the information in Spanish appears to make it easier to translate to English and increases the chances it will be retained in English. Are English words, concepts, etc paired up with Spanish words, concepts, etc. when stored in long term memory? We are not sure.

Informal conversations with other general educators, ESL educators, and Hispanic/Latino students and parents led to a better understanding of what we were observing. This also helped to guide us in what to look for in those observation periods. During observations and interviews we were mindful of the fact that even though our Hispanic/Latino students speak the language it is still very difficult for them to express themselves verbally or on paper in another language.

Our results and discussion:

external factors

A review of the research literature surrounding the issue of Hispanic student success in American classrooms reveals a couple of patterns. First is a pattern of low achievement and high drop-out rate among Hispanic students in U.S. schools. Secondly, as one researcher put it, "There is no possible doubt about the failure of the American school system to serve Hispanic students.". (Baker, 1996)

What are some factors that are responsible for these effects? Are they presently affecting student success at GMS? The following are issues or statements that we validated or repudiated in our investigation.

Statement #1: It is important to Hispanic students and their families that they are able to retain their ability to speak Spanish because it is very important in

maintaining the family's identity. Some experts have recommended that more and more teachers actually make an effort to learn the minority language and use it in the classroom. (Baker, 1996).

One of the authors of this paper has been spending a lot of time and energy over the past two years learning Spanish. This year he began to use Spanish in his classroom: speaking some with students, writing quizzes in Spanish, and offering an informal "get familiar with Spanish" class during study hall. Last year he experimented with a class designed to look at the influence of the Spanish language on the American West which was well-received by the Hispanic students. This use of Spanish in the classroom has encouraged some of his Hispanic students to get more involved in daily class work and as a result, the students' grades have improved significantly. Some students who were failing are now getting B's and A's.

This use of Spanish in the classroom can be considered an internal factor issue because when teachers use Spanish in this way, it validates the students' home background and culture in front of their Anglo peers. It also supports our speculations that Hispanic students process information into long term memory via the Spanish channel. New information presented in Spanish would seemingly connect better to prior knowledge stored and retrieved via the Spanish channel.

Another thought surfaced as we did our research. Assessment often is two fold for our Hispanic students. Assessments measure knowledge of subject matter and also knowledge of another language as well as the ability to express themselves accurately through application of that second language in written expression skills.

Statement #2: Hispanic culture does not put as high a value on formal education as does Anglo American culture.

The results of our Parent Input Questionnaire were overwhelmingly in favor of the conclusion that Hispanic parents are strongly supportive of public education for their children. Every respondent said that they strongly agreed that a public education is important to their child's future career and job success.

The overall Hispanic attendance percentages at GMS were higher than those of the Anglo students, indicating that the home environment does support the students becoming a part of society through participation in the educational system. (Figure 4).

Statement #3: It is recommended by experts that minority clubs and organizations be established and efforts should be made to "create meaningful interaction between white and minority students." (Baker, p. 63)

Most of the Parent Input Questionnaire respondents noted that their students are not involved in any extracurricular activities. Most did not indicate a particular interest in getting their children involved in existing activities nor establishing new activities that might be of greater interest to their children.

We have noticed that even when natural opportunities for "creating meaningful interaction between white and minority students" present themselves, Hispanic students are sometimes (perhaps often) not encouraged to take advantage of them. The following are two examples:

(Situation #1) This Spring there was a field trip to a local bowling alley for one 8th grade team. This seemed like a great opportunity for healthy interaction between all students. Some Hispanic students asked to be excused from the field trip so that they could stay back at school to participate in a Hispanic (only) party. Should these students have been allowed to stay back (to validate cultural identity) or required to go with the larger group (encourage positive interaction between cultures).? Once at the bowling alley, the Hispanic students got a lane together at one end of the building and did not interact much with the rest of the group. How can we structure things so that more positive interaction occurs , especially in such situations that would seem to be so natural?

(Situation #2) A local youth soccer organization attracts at least 500 young players from ages 5 to 10, less than 1% of whom are Hispanic (Goshen is nearly 20% Hispanic). Why is this? Soccer is a favorite sport of Latino kids? Where are they?

All of the coaches in this league are non-Hispanic but that is not because Hispanic coaches were not asked to be a part of the program: those Hispanic adults who were asked , for one reason or another, declined the invitation to be a part of the program. How can we expect to get Hispanic students involved in the classroom when there is not even enough adult support available for them to get involved with soccer?

Statement #4: Communication between the school and Hispanic households is difficult and ineffective.

Our experience shows that this is definitely the case. Getting any meaningful information from Hispanic households is very difficult. We thought that our Parent Input Questionnaire provided a perfect opportunity for parents to give honest, frank, pointed feedback to the school , yet it yielded bland, run-of-the -mill responses that appeared more scripted than beneficial. We were hoping for more specific comments that we could respond to in constructive ways.

Also, in reference to the radio program that Mr.Thiery appeared on with Mr. Prieto, the desire was to appear on the show 3 or 4 times to really engage the Hispanic audience in some open conversation about some educational issues. However, Mr. Thiery was only able to appear once and then other issues took precedence and he was not asked to return again. So it appears to be a very difficult thing to consistently operate open lines of communication between the Hispanic and Anglo communities.

Statement #5: The Hispanic culture is more accepting of boys dropping out of school than girls.

All but one respondent to the Parent Input Questionnaire agreed that an education is equally important for both boys and girls.

Statement #6: Researchers have characterized many American schools as actively discriminating against Hispanic students (Baker p. 50).

While a majority of parents responding to the Parent Input Questionnaire shared that their student(s) were experiencing the most success in Science class and the least amount of success in English and Math classes, only a couple said that they would like to see any particular changes in the classroom environment at GMS. (One said that they would like to see more attention paid to their student and the other suggested more Spanish-speaking teachers at GMS.)

Conclusions

Teachers must continue to be sensitive to diversity in their classrooms. It is important for educators to design interventions that meet student needs. If formal assessment information is not available, informal assessments are possible and beneficial. Our studies suggest that interventions such as response opportunities and

proximity can be successfully implemented and significantly impact student achievement. It is affirmed through our observations and research that as students become more engaged in the learning process mastery of learning increases.

The use of Spanish in the classroom is another useful tool in getting Hispanic students to connect to the learning environment. Even beginning skills had an impact , fluency not required.

We have been able to apply our findings from our research in various ways. We have discussed them with our Hispanic students and also with educators in team meetings. Mrs. Bartley and Ms. Sutton attended a child-study conference on a Hispanic student and shared some research findings with the general education teachers, the counselor, and the ESL teacher. They were able to provide more in-depth awareness and interventions that were relevant and applicable for the Hispanic student.

From our exploration of external factors that influence student success at Goshen Middle School we would recommend that teachers do the following:

1. Teach yourself some Spanish and talk with your students. Ask them how to say key phrases. Be interested in their language. If possible, start to really learn Spanish and use it. Parents have commented that they appreciate our efforts to learn Spanish and that they feel that now we can understand and appreciate their challenge to learn English.
2. Occasionally provide Hispanic students the opportunity to take assessments in Spanish.
3. Build relationships with Hispanic students and their families one on one. Find some way or ways to interact with each other and support each other. Be as personal about the process as possible.

Figure 1a

Observation guidelines:

Strand A Response Opportunities

An opportunity provided by the teacher for a student to respond (T)
and student initiated responses (S)

Examples of opportunities:

responding to a question expressing an opinion
reciting, reading aloud oral report confirming another student's response
demonstrating (project) pointing to a map, asking a question,

Code with a "T" or "S" tally mark each time there is a response. No response when given the chance put an "N"

Strand B Feedback

Teacher's response to the student's performance, positive or negative.

Code with a "S" for specific, a "NS" for a nonspecific response, and a "NR" for no response.

Strand C Proximity

where the student is seated in the classroom and his closeness to the instructor

Code with a "P" for proximity. (with in arm' reach of the instructor)

Figure 1b

Observation Coding Form *

R: response	F: feedback	P: proximity
T (teacher initiated)	S (specific)	P (proximity)
S (student initiated)	NS (nonspecific)	
N (student did not respond)	NR (no response)	

	1st observation			1st observation			1st observation			1st observation		
	strands			strands			strands			strands		
	R	F	P	R	F	P	R	F	P	R	F	P
Students												
# / Name												

* (Adapted from TESA, modified to meet our research needs)

Figure 2 a (English version)
TARGET RESEARCH
Parent Input Questionnaire

Please fill out the following questionnaire thoughtfully. We are sincerely interested in your opinions and thoughts. What you say may lead to changes at school which can directly impact your student and hopefully increase his/her chances for success at GMS.

1. In your opinion, how important is a public education to your child's future career/job success?

2. What extracurricular programs is your child involved in currently at GMS?

3. What extracurricular programs would you like to see your child involved in at GMS?

4. List any extracurricular activities that you would like your child to be involved in that are not currently being offered at GMS.

5. Please list ways in which you feel that your child is currently being successful at GMS.

6. Please list ways in which you feel that your child is currently experiencing frustration at GMS.

7. What do you think are the 2 biggest challenges in the classroom that your student is currently facing or has faced at GMS.

8. List 2 or 3 specific things that, in your opinion, could be changed in the classroom that you think would likely help your student be more successful academically at GMS.

9. I feel that it is very important for my child's future that he/she perform well at GMS.

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly Disagree

10. Do you think that a formal education is more important for boys? girls? equally important for both? equally unimportant?

11. Right now, my student tends to earn grades in the range of (Please circle one).

B's or above B's and C's C's C's and D's D's and below

Thank you for your time. Please sign and date below to certify the veracity of the above information:

Signed_____ Date _____

Figure 2b (Spanish version)
Cuestionario Para Padres

Grado del estudiante _____

Favor de llenar el cuestionario. Estamos sinceraente interesados en sus opiniones.

1. ESCRIBA que tan importante es la educacion para el futuro de su hijo/hija en cuanto a su exito en su carrera o trabajo.

2. ESCRIBA las actividades extras (depues de la escuela) en las que participa su hijo/hija.

3. ESCRIBA las actividades extras (despues de la escuela) que le gustaria que su hijo/hija paritcipara.

4. HAGA UNA LISTA de las actividades extras que le gustaria que su hijo/hija participara, **pero que no son ofrecidas** por la escuela. Por ejemplo, clases de baile folklorico o tocar guitarra o cocinar comidas tipicas, etc.

5. DIGANOS en cuales clases o actividades su hijo/hija esta teniendo exito.

6. DIGANOS en cuales clases o actividades su hijo/hija esta experimentando frustracion.

7. Cuales son los dos problemas mas grandes que su hijo/hija ha confrontado en la escuela? (Por ejemplo, falta de dominar bien el ingles, falta de leer bien el ingles, falta de estudios en la matematica, falta de la maestra/el maestro de explicar bien la leccion, etc.)

8. Cuales cosas piensa Ud. que se debe cambiar en los salones para que su hijo/hija tenga exito en la escuela?

9. Yo siento que es muy importante que mi hijo/hija se desempene en sus estudios en la escuela. (marque uno)
___ estoy muy de acuerdo
___ estoy de acuerdo
___ neutral
___ no estoy de acuerdo
___ no estoy muy de acuerdo

10. Piensa Ud. que la educacion es muy importante para: (marque uno)
___ ninos
___ ninas
___ igual para los dos
___ no importa nada

11. En el ultimo reporte de calificaciones me hijo/hija saco calificaciones de: (marque uno)

___ A (9 y 10) ___B (8) ___C (6 y 7) ___D (5) ___F (4)

Gracias por su tiempo. Por favor firme abajo y ponga la fecha.

Firmado _____ Fecha: _____

(A special thanks to Donna Hernandez and her staff for translation)

Figure 3

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter as an interested parent, coach, classroom teacher, and researcher into intercultural relations. Last week the Goshen Youth Soccer program kicked off another season, the first for me. I was surprised to see how many kids turned out and I understand that there are more kids involved on additional nights of the week. I was also surprised at what I did not see; among the 200 or so kids who were there, I saw almost no one who was Hispanic. This puzzled me.

As a teacher and teacher-researcher (TARGET Research) I have been looking into ways to help Hispanic students interact in positive, relationship-building ways with their non-Hispanic peers (and vice versa) in order to promote a greater sense of belonging and friendship at school which hopefully will result in greater academic success as well.

As a parent I would like my kids to be able to interact as much as possible with their Hispanic peers, especially in non-threatening, "natural" sorts of situations like sports.

As a soccer coach, I would like to have the opportunity to get to know some Hispanic families better.

Knowing that soccer is a favorite sport in most Latin American countries, I would expect that many Hispanic kids would be interested in participating in Goshen Youth Soccer, and yet they weren't there. Why is this so? Can anyone help shed some light on this?

Sincerely,

Timothy A. Thiery
708 S. 3rd St.
Goshen, IN 46526
(219) 533-0197

Figure 4

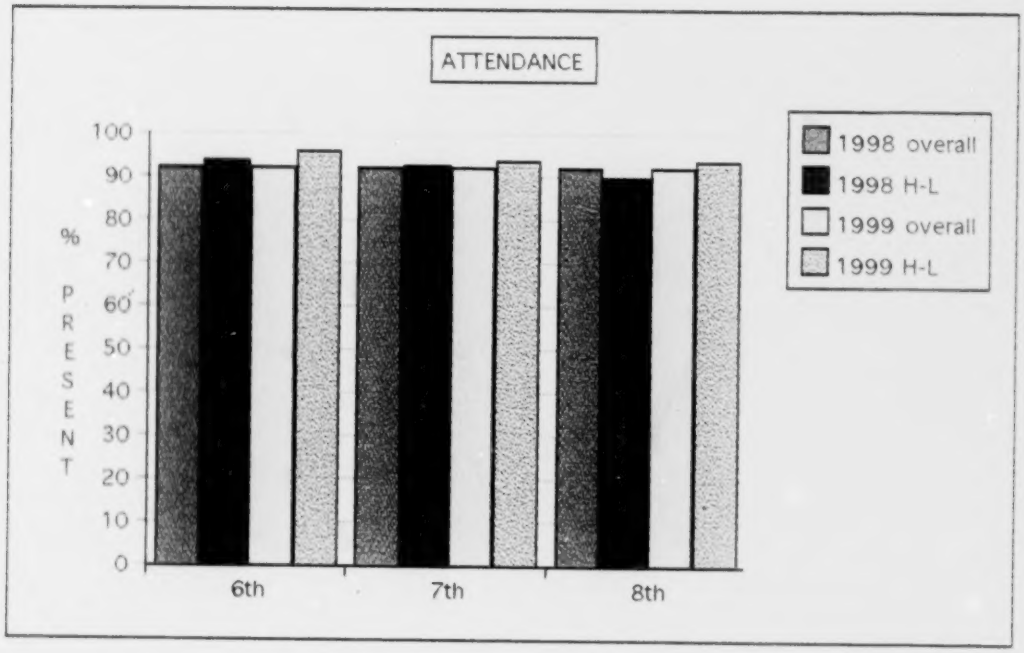

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Figure 5

Circle response given.

School Attitude Interview*

(Hispanic/Latino Student)

About my School Work :

I think I am doing all right.

Sometimes I do well, sometimes I don't.

I am not doing well.

I don't know how I am doing.

About Reading:

I think I am a good reader.

I am an average reader.

I am a poor reader.

About Things I am Suppose to do in the Classroom:

I usually do what I am suppose to do

I am not sure what I am suppose to do

I don't do what I am suppose to do

About The Teacher Calling on me in Class:

The teacher calls on me about as much as I want her to.

I think the teacher calls on me too much.

I think the teacher does not call on me enough.

I don't want to be called on in class.

About the Teacher Helping me:

The teacher helps me enough.

I wish the teacher would help me more.

The teacher helps me too much.

I don't want any help at all.

How do you feel when the teacher stands or works near you?

I like it. I don't like it. I don't care

*(Adapted from Burks School Attitude, modified to meet our needs.)

Figure 6

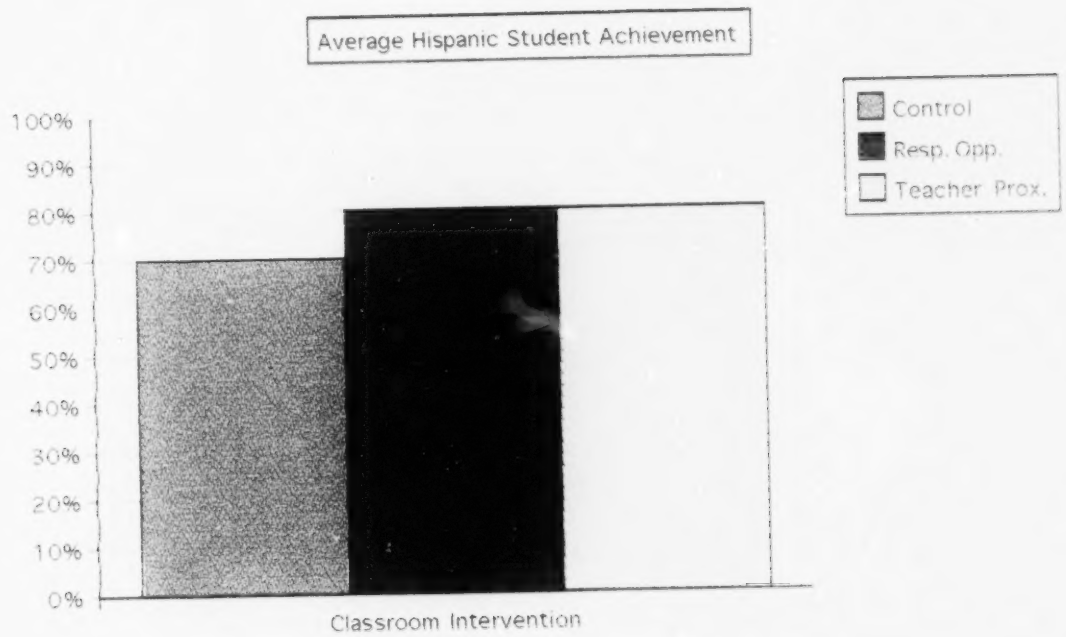

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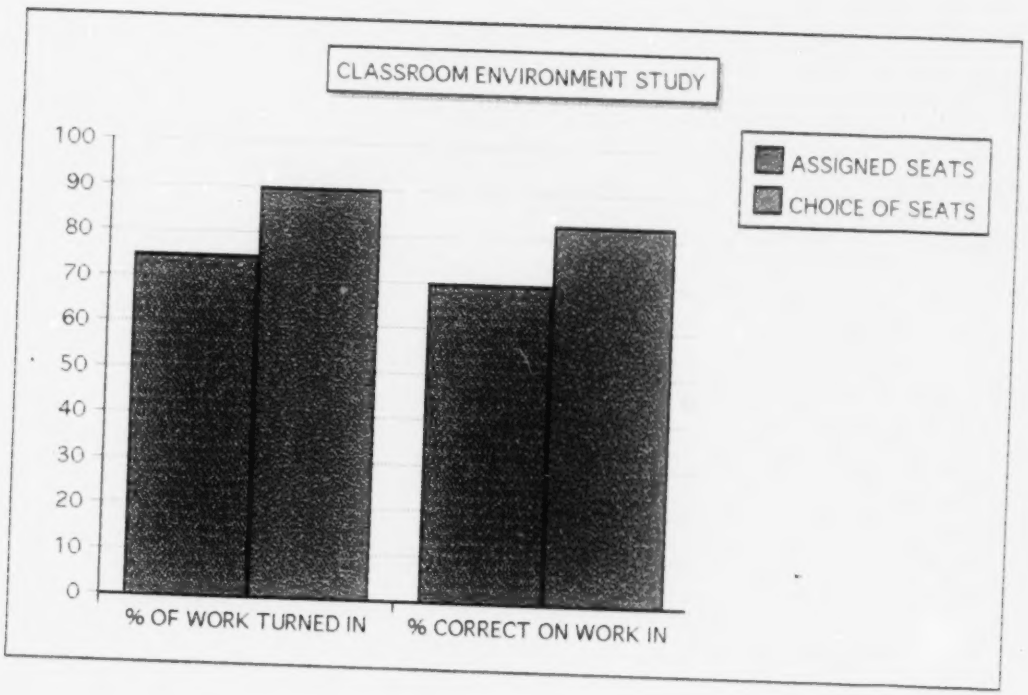
Figure 7



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